20TH CENTURY STUDIOS PRESENTS

SEND HELP

"SEND HELP"
PRODUCTION INFORMATION

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KEY INFORMATION AND CREDITS

Directed by:	Sam Raimi
Written by:	Damian Shannon & Mark Swift
Produced by:	Sam Raimi, p.g.a., Zainab Azizi, p.g.a.
Executive Producer:	JJ Hook
Original Music By:	Danny Elfman
Costume Designer:	Anna Cahill
Visual Effects Supervisor:	Everett Burrell
Editor:	Bob Murawski, ACE
Production Designer:	Ian Gracie
Director of Photography:	Bill Pope
Cast:	Rachel McAdams (Linda Liddle), Dylan O'Brien (Bradley Preston), Edyll Ismail (Zuri), Xavier Samuel (Donovan), Chris Pang (Chase), Dennis Haysbert (Franklin), Thaneth Warakulnukroh (Boat Captain), Emma Raimi (River)
Genre:	Darkly Comedic Psychological Thriller
Release Date:	January 30, 2026 In Theaters
Rating:	R
Running Time:	1 hr 53 min

SHORT SYNOPSIS

Two colleagues become stranded on a deserted island, the only survivors of a plane crash. On the island, they must overcome past grievances and work together to survive, but ultimately, it's an unsettling, darkly humorous battle of wills and wits to make it out alive. "Send Help" is directed by genre-bending visionary Sam Raimi and stars Oscar® nominee Rachel McAdams and Dylan O'Brien. The film is produced by Raimi and Zainab Azizi, executive produced by JJ Hook and written by Damian Shannon & Mark Swift, with original music by Danny Elfman. The all-original darkly comedic psychological thriller from 20th Century Studios releases in theaters nationwide on January 30, 2026.

ABOUT PRODUCTION

"Send Help," a psychological thriller from director/producer Sam Raimi, expertly balances horror with dark comedy as it explores the escalating twists and turns that unfold when overlooked and undervalued employee Linda Liddle (Rachel McAdams) and her dismissive, arrogant new boss Bradley Preston (Dylan O'Brien) find themselves stranded alone on a deserted island. The action-packed survival thriller is based on a screenplay by writing duo Damian Shannon and Mark Swift, who, like Raimi, have a deep-rooted appreciation for mixed-genre storytelling.

As such, Shannon and Swift had been actively developing ideas with Raimi in mind since the early stages of their career. "One of the reasons our taste is what it is, is because in our formative years we watched a lot of Sam Raimi movies," Shannon says. "You know a Sam Raimi movie when you see it."

"We heard that Sam wanted to do an elevated thriller-horror," Swift continues. "We looked in our bag, found our Linda Liddle concept, and put the pitch and screenplay together."

They brought their pitch for "Send Help" to Raimi by way of Zainab Azizi, his trusted producing partner and president of his production company, Raimi Productions. The idea of a female antihero–rare enough–and unpredictable shifting power dynamics was the core concept.

"We developed this pitch for Sam," Azizi explains. "It has scares, laughs and the chills and thrills that Sam loves to do. He is all about expecting the unexpected."

As Raimi puts it, "Zainab came to me and said, 'I just heard this story, and it's great. We have to get involved with it.' I met with the writers and Zainab, and we heard their pitch. It was great, as she promised. I was excited by it, excited about the story and the character possibilities. That's really what drew me to it."

"I also loved the 'What if?' aspect of the screenplay," continues Raimi. "What if a woman was cheated by the boys' club at work, held down by corporate management and a terrible, mean boss who treats her unfairly? What if she was unable to succeed because of the way things

inherently are in our society? And what if they crash-landed on an island and the roles were reversed? She knows how to survive in the wild. It's her hobby, but all Bradley knows is corporate politics and management. He knows nothing useful when it comes to surviving in the real world. We learn who is capable and who is not."

"Sam saw how much was in these two very different characters colliding," Swift adds. "He loves big arcs, and where Linda starts in this movie and where she ends are very different places. Likewise for Bradley. I think Sam was excited about the challenge of taking the audience on this ride in terms of who they're rooting for and what kind of surprises lie in between."

For Rachel McAdams, the complex characters were key. "I loved the moral ambiguity around Linda and Bradley," she explains. "It's a true two-hander with lots of twists and turns–I love that about the script. I was very excited about the chills and thrills in it. And then when I heard Sam was directing it, it was like, 'Oh, that's just so perfect. This is right in his sweet spot.'"

The initial draw for Azizi was the idea of rooting for a relatable underdog. "My vision was heavily focused on Linda Liddle as a character and her lifestyle in the office. We've all been Linda in some form. We've worked really hard and been underappreciated, and it's time for some justice. I attached myself as producer from pitch, and we developed it into a full-length feature. Sam's brilliant vision brought it to life by 10 and made it into the kooky, wild roller-coaster ride that it is today. It took a couple of years, and now we're here."

"Zainab had the screenplay under her arm," says Shannon. "She had her machete, and she chopped through the Hollywood jungle, taking this where it needed to go."

Pre-production for "Send Help" began in early 2025, and the shoot spanned an 11-week period. The first six weeks were filmed in Australia, primarily at Disney Studios, with a number of scenes filmed on location around Sydney. The final five weeks were filmed on the southwest coast of Thailand.

CASTAWAYS AND CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS

LINDA LIDDLE (RACHEL MCADAMS)

Rachel McAdams ("Spotlight," "Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret.," "Mean Girls") stars as Linda Liddle, an exceptional yet undervalued Strategy and Planning executive at a consulting firm. Outgoing but often awkward, she's a "Survivor" enthusiast and bookworm who lives alone, loves inspirational quotes, and can hold full conversations with her pet bird, Sweetie.

"Linda Liddle is that girl that everybody knows in the office," Azizi says. "She's kooky, she's strange, but she's really good at her job. She may not be the most popular person, but she means well and she's got a good heart."

“We put this armor of positivity around Linda through these quotes she finds, these little pieces of philosophy that she’s cobbled together to protect her from the forces that are assaulting her,” says Damian Shannon. “We thought, ‘That’s how you’re going to love her.’”

Linda finds herself passed over for a well-deserved VP promotion she was promised by her late boss after nearly a decade of exceptional work at her firm. She confronts her arrogant new boss, Bradley, who is visibly repulsed by her quirks and refuses to see her worth. Bradley begrudgingly invites Linda to join his inner circle on the private jet to Bangkok, Thailand, for an upcoming merger meeting, as a delay tactic before shipping her out to a satellite office. A storm hits, their plane catastrophically crashes, and suddenly Linda’s survivalist skills and deep-rooted love of “Survivor” are no longer mocked quirks. Instead, they’re essential and empowering.

“I love the thrill of her fantasy coming true,” says McAdams. “The woman who seems like she’s never going to get out of the rat race, from under the thumb of the patriarchy. She was at the end of her rope. I don’t know what would’ve happened to Linda if that plane hadn’t crashed, but suddenly her stars change.”

“The world that she lives in is run by Bradley’s rules,” says Mark Swift. “She’s trapped in a system, but when they get to the deserted island, all that goes out the window. It’s a different power structure, and Linda can create the universe as it should be, as it deserves to be for someone with her skills.”

“She finds on the island that she is capable,” Raimi agrees. “She does deserve it. In fact, she deserves more. These guys that have been surrounding her are idiots. She’s like a seed that finally blossoms when planted in the fertile soil of this island. But something’s wrong with the flower that’s growing. It’s a little warped, we find out.”

“Our lead character knows what she’s doing,” adds Azizi. “She is a survivalist and she’s very smart. She’s experienced and knows what to do on the island. Linda Liddle is not a fragile female character. She is strong.”

As McAdams puts it, “Linda is an incredibly juicy character. It was great to be able to play such a character arc and have her go through such a transformation. It’s probably the most transformative character I’ve ever played in the span of an hour and a half. Those were new, unique, exciting challenges.”

As the antihero, Linda is not making typical choices, and the audience has to be able to empathize with her from the outset. In order for viewers to go on such an extreme and challenging journey with her, finding the right actress to embody Linda was critical.

“One of the key things about casting Linda was that she had to be likable, and had to sustain that through extreme behavior,” explains Shannon. “She had to be both vulnerable and steely strong, and we had to be able to feel connected to her through some bumpy moments. When you think of it that way, that’s Rachel McAdams.”

McAdams and Raimi had worked together previously on the 2022 box-office hit "Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness" and were excited about the prospect of working together again–particularly because "Send Help" offered lots of room for experimentation.

According to McAdams, "Sam is exceedingly passionate when it comes to making movies. He's such a master. He gets so into story and character, and he's so collaborative. And you can throw the wackiest ideas at him and he's like, 'I love it. Let's try it.' This movie had a lot of room for that kind of experimentation, so that was really exciting."

"Sam was asking, 'How much can we get away with? How many times can we lose the audience and win them back? Let's just try it and see,'" McAdams continues. "It's one of the more experimental films I've done. That was terrifying and really thrilling. I loved the journey."

Actor Dylan O'Brien was drawn to play opposite McAdams and recognized the empathy she could bring to the role.

"Rachel is one of the most honest actors I've ever seen perform," says O'Brien. "And in terms of reacting to anything in a scene, I've never seen someone who, every take, nothing is contrived. Nothing is predetermined. She's truly alive and present in every moment of every take. And she's not Kathy Bates in 'Misery.' It's something more earnest and relatable, in a way that makes it fun when she starts making outrageous decisions. Rachel always brings the audience back to how lonely this person was, how unappreciated she was off the island. No matter the choices that she ends up making on the island, Rachel anchors it with such a strong sense of empathy for this person."

BRADLEY PRESTON (DYLAN O'BRIEN)
When charismatic but pompous Bradley inherits the CEO position at his late father's consulting firm, he has little interest in maintaining his father's legacy. Instead, he wants the stolid, functional people out of the eyeline of his executive office.

"The key to Bradley was making him awful, but also super charming," says Shannon. "He had to be a guy who had accomplished a lot of things in his life through his charm, not through hard work."

The challenge was up to actor Dylan O'Brien ("Twinless," "Saturday Night"), who admits he saw what attracted Raimi and the producers to casting him.

"I think I can only be a 'bad guy' in a certain type of sensibility. I don't know if I would ever be believed as the bad guy who's a villainous, scary creature, so I feel like this was a version that I could play with, where I could be believable as this CEO who is such a little shit."

O'Brien saw the whole script as a high-wire act, with the sympathy of the audience constantly going back and forth between Bradley and Linda.

“In the opening of the film, you see him as a monster,” O’Brien says. “This fixation on her tuna breath, showing how viscerally repulsive she is to him, for no good reason, because he’s so uppity and a prick. But as much as I had to wholly commit to his deceptive ways, I needed to turn back around on her again. Bradley finds a newfound respect for Linda and grows more comfortable with her.”

In creating Bradley Preston, O’Brien says he was able to present Raimi with performance choices that went beyond what he would do with other directors.

“I knew I could trust the hands I was in,” O’Brien says. “I felt that Sam would know what to do with it, or he would get it in a way that would feel seen, that maybe with another director I’d think, ‘I don’t know if they will get that vibe. It’s a really extreme version of the scene.’ But the world that Sam creates, you can push those boundaries, and that’s a really fun thing to do as an actor.”

“Dylan would try something that might have seemed ridiculous in theory, and made it work in this heightened world,” says McAdams. “They’re pushing the limits, and he was amazing at hitting those moments and bringing a lot of humor as well. He’s always doing something surprising. He created a real person and not a straight-ahead villain, which is exactly what our assignment was–to walk the line of bad person and good person to find the flawed person that is relatable.”

As with Linda, it was important that the audience feel sympathy for Bradley and even believe that he might be redeemable. We come to understand that his father was always at work, and that his mother was tough and abusive.

“A big theme in ‘Send Help’ is that monsters aren’t born, they’re created,” explains Swift. “If the audience sees Linda as a monster, they at least will come to understand why she is that way. And the same is true for Bradley. I hope he’s a character that people hate, but also begrudgingly maybe also like a bit.”

“It was great to see Bradley’s deconstruction and watch him breaking down,” Raimi explains. “He starts in the office as this very capable and mean man who’s in control. You can see that he’s playing it with a little bit of insecurity underneath it all. Dylan plants the seeds perfectly for when we get to the island. You see Bradley outraged, even though Linda has built a shelter for him, found him water and food. He still tries to be the boss, reprimanding his no longer employee. It’s funny to watch him slowly recognize that he’s no longer in power, and really never was over her.”

“All his insecurities come into full bloom,” Raimi continues. “I love the contrast that the script and the actors provide of Linda growing in her capabilities and recognition of herself. And Bradley fighting against who he really is. All of his insecurities and inabilities come to the

surface, and it's a great explosion, a great contrast to see them going their separate but bound ways."

McAdams had an excellent experience working with O'Brien throughout production. "Dylan is such a naturally talented actor," she says. "He grounds every scene yet takes big swings at the same time. It's such a beautiful thing to watch–as Linda, I believed every word he said. He's very funny and has great comedic timing. It's a character that could have been more one-dimensional, and Dylan brought Bradley to life in a beautiful, unexpected way."

O'Brien was also a huge fan of Raimi's and was thrilled by the prospect of working with the renowned director.

"I loved the idea of this absolutely wild and original, fresh-feeling swing," O'Brien explains. "It's such a genre mash, and the third act spirals so off the rails in a way that's supported by Sam's sensibility and style."

O'Brien also had a great appreciation for Raimi's sense of humor. The first day O'Brien walked into Raimi's office for rehearsals, the director had a paper bag over his head. "Sam is really silly in a way that I really enjoy, and I think it frees people up around him. Those things go a long way in terms of the environment and the comfortability on set. I mean, the first time I met Sam in person, I walked in and he's like, 'Nice to meet you. Come, sit down. I'm very excited to work with you. I love all your performances.' He had a bag on his head with holes in his eyes, and he didn't drop the bit for 20 minutes. That encapsulates Sam Raimi."

O'Brien's portrayal of Bradley also helped shape the film's humor and balance the multiple genres at play.

"Blending horror and comedy is always a tricky, tricky road," says producer Zainab Azizi. "We had humor that was scripted, and Dylan did a great job adding more comedy to the character. He added so many funny lines that made it into the film."

ZURI (EDYLL ISMAIL)

Bradley's fiancée, Zuri, who we meet briefly before the plane goes down, is a statuesque beauty who shows her mettle and dedication to Bradley when she hires a Thai boat to continue looking for Bradley on her own once the authorities call off the search in the area.

Actress and model Edyll Ismail ("La Brea"), who portrays Zuri, says, "She's someone who can walk into a room and take over in some form. She needs to sweep in and make Linda feel small and insignificant. I guess I was able to do that!"

Despite achieving this impact, Raimi stressed to Ismail that "Zuri is not a bad person. She's a sweet, kind human being, who happens to be this person that Linda isn't."

“I saw Bradley as unkind, especially with Linda,” adds Ismail, “and Zuri comes off as warm. But there’s definitely a deep love and connection between Zuri and Bradley, which you see as she reaches the island searching for him. She really loves him, wants to have a life with him, and feels that was cut short.”

Linda is no female ally to Zuri in the end, but working opposite Rachel McAdams was thrilling for Ismail.

“Rachel is so detailed in how she creates a character–every quirk and twitch of Linda’s movement, the walk, the expression,” says Ismail. “I was in awe of how much work she put into this role, and how she created someone who you love and hate but you still root for.

“That speaks to Sam too, who transcends genre–the horror, the dark humor, it’s all there. He has a unique way of storytelling that is so visually striking. I worked with some amazing people, Sam, Rachel and Dylan. It’s a dream come true.”

“Edyll did a great job,” says Raimi. “It was such a hard job. She had to be the girlfriend of Bradley, which is a hard job in and of itself because he’s such a jerk and so insecure. It would take a lot of self-grounding to be able to endure that. She’s an innocent victim, because she loves Bradley for some reason.”

“The role required a lot of physicality,” continues Raimi. “She falls off the cliff and hangs on in a harness. And then one night, Linda awakens to the sound of someone calling her name. She sees something crawling out of the ocean, and it’s Zuri. The amount of physicality required for that role was crazy. She had to undergo a lot of underwater work too. She’s a strong actress, both in ability and in what she can physically endure.”

The bone-chilling way that Zuri crawls out of the ocean was no small feat either.

“That was her performance,” says Raimi. “She had to perform it backwards, and then we rolled in reverse and were able to print it forwards. It happens in forward motion as you watch it, but it has an unnervingly nightmarish quality.”

DONOVAN (XAVIER SAMUEL)

Donovan, Bradley’s smug and sycophantic friend, has no reservations about passing off Linda’s work as his own. As Bradley’s college fraternity brother and golfing partner, he is the top pick for VP ahead of Linda and joins the group on the plane to negotiate the Bangkok merger.

“Donovan pretends that he’s friends with Linda, but he’s actually just a manipulator and deeply insecure,” observes Xavier Samuel (“Elvis”), who portrays him. “What’s great about the film is you end up rooting for Linda in a big way, especially because Bradley’s such a terrible, terrible person. One of the things that makes Rachel such a phenomenal actor is that she brings dimension to a character that could be so easily shallow and monstrous. You really feel for her.”

“Xavier Samuel is very talented. He’s a total chameleon,” says Azizi. “Donovan, or Dono, which is actually a nickname Dylan came up with, is charming, sneaky and very handsome.”

Donovan doesn’t fare well as the plane goes down, in a dramatic and grotesque way related to his signature suspenders. Samuel happily did his own stunts for the scene.

“I wore a full harness, strapped in and strung up on wires,” he recalls, “with a lot of floating in midair, which was fun to figure out. That scene is actually my favorite piece of writing in the film. Whippity, whippity, whap! That’s what happens to Donovan’s face before Linda closes the plane window blind on him forever!”

“He’s a great actor brimming with ability,” Raimi says. “He could be a leading man in any movie. He could be the right-hand man. He could be the villain. He’s such a versatile performer and has great physicality. We had him up on wires, and he was flying around and doing these absurd things being thrown out of the plane. He was very capable.”

CHASE LI (CHRIS PANG)
Chase, the office flirt and a member of Bradley’s inner circle, treats Linda with unwelcoming disdain and adds to her torment at work. As part of Bradley’s crew, he joins the group traveling on the plane to Bangkok for the merger meeting.

Like Xavier Samuel, Chris Pang (“Crazy Rich Asians”) was able to do some of his own stunt work for the sequence in which the plane goes down.

“I’ve been on productions before where I’ve been promised wire work and never got to do it,” says Pang. “I was so excited about this because I was able to train, and there I was getting thrown around the plane. It’s an epic action sequence. I’m excited for audiences to see it.”

On working with Raimi, Pang says, “I don’t think I’ve ever felt more comfortable and safe as on Sam’s set. He really cares, and he has absolute control over all the micro details, on the technical side as well as story and character. You feel looked after. He’s so generous with his time, he listens to all your ideas, and he just makes you feel good.”

“Chris Pang is a brilliant actor,” says Raimi. “He’s also physically super capable. We had him up on wires for days flying around in that plane. He’s got a great sense of humor too. He is very funny to be around, but on set he can deliver a very subtle performance that’s really hysterical to watch if you break it down and see what he’s doing. He was a great member of the boys’ club at the office, and the movie wouldn’t have worked as well without him.”

FRANKLIN (DENNIS HAYSBERT)
As a long-term employee of the consulting firm and a key operative under Bradley’s late father, Franklin is tasked with helping Bradley integrate into the company. His knowledge of Linda’s worth leads him to advocate for her. Franklin is the only one who is aware of Linda's benefit to the company and reminds Bradley that his father promised her the promotion.

RIVER (EMMA RAIMI)
Linda's no-nonsense colleague and cubicle mate, River, is sympathetic toward Linda and her many quirks. While River's cool-girl nonchalance is less than friendly when it comes to Linda, she recognizes and resents the boys' club at the office.

LOCATIONS

The bookends of "Send Help" were filmed in Australia, including the setup of the office, Linda's home life, and the sequences on the plane, as well as certain island sequences that needed extensive special-effects work and safety protocols.

The decision to film on location was a commitment to authenticity by Sam Raimi, director of photography Bill Pope and producer Zainab Azizi.

"We paid great attention to detail," says Raimi. "Because the story is so off the wall, we really needed to ground ourselves in the location, the things that she actually could make, could hunt, the environment. We tried to be accurate with a great team of experts including our art department and survivalist, Ky Furneaux."

"It's also a huge testament to Disney and 20th Century Studios," says screenwriter Mark Swift. "I think audiences crave the real thing. Too many times, I see audiences complaining about nothing but green screen. Audiences are incredibly savvy, and I think shooting on actual islands made a big difference."

Production designer Ian Gracie was tasked with finding an island that would be what Raimi considered to be a third character in the film, full of dangers and secrets, wild boars and forbidden rocks.

The broad region settled on was the bay between Krabi and Phuket, dotted with hundreds of tiny islands. Gracie spent two weeks working through Google Earth, then in person with a Thai scouting crew.

"I've worked on islands before, so I knew the unique challenges they create for a film crew," says Gracie. "That includes tides, weather, sun direction and access to the mainland. They all go into the mix before you can decide to go somewhere."

The team was looking for a location that executive producer JJ Hook referred to as "a Golden Goose."

"We needed cliffs, bamboo, minimal tides and clear water, all these bits and pieces to make this perfect island," Hook says. "We couldn't find one beach that did it all. At Ko Hong and in Krabi

Bay, the tides are enormous. So, if you're shooting a scene, at the beginning the tide is right by your feet, but a couple of hours later the water's gone."

Once they had parameters to work within, Raimi, Pope, Gracie, Hook and visual effects supervisor Everett Burrell scouted to make final decisions.

The remote Ko Hong island was chosen for what Gracie calls "its absolute beauty as the 'hero beach.' It's the beach Linda and Bradley land on," he continues, "but which would be impossible for us to work on for more than a couple of days because of the arduous travel times and accessibility for crew and gear."

Traveling to Ko Hong island meant a two-hour drive and close to one-hour boat ride for the cast and crew, so the bulk of the filming locations for the rest of the island scenes were on the mainland, with easier access for trucks and heavy camera equipment.

To enhance the hero beach, the visual effects team shot plates of sheer cliffs in Thailand, which were then extended to create a ridge line 200 feet high, which was crucial to some of the most dramatic scenes in the film.

"Sheer cliff-wall faces are impossible to film on and dangerous, so the plates were manipulated and extended by our visual effects team, then we used those to film these key scenes, safely, at Disney Studios in Sydney," explains Gracie.

"It was great to finally get to Thailand and feel the elements," he adds. "The sweat and the sand was real. And it was nice to have that time in the studio where it was a controlled environment, so we could focus on the characters, the story, where we were headed. By the time we got to the beach, we were a well-oiled machine."

"Thailand was one of my favorite countries to shoot in," Azizi agrees. "The people are so kind, the food is incredible, and the crew is so hardworking. The biggest challenge was definitely making sure that everybody stayed hydrated."

According to Raimi, "It was great to really be in that tropical, no-civilization-around environment. It helped a lot, because the heat was bearing down on them and the sand was burning hot."

LEARNING THE ART OF SURVIVAL

An integral crew member in Thailand was Australian survival expert and stunt person Ky Furneaux, who has stunt-doubled for Hollywood actresses and set records on shows like "Naked and Afraid."

Raimi was clear with Furneaux that it was crucial to make the survival elements authentic.

“Sam didn’t want anyone to watch ‘Send Help’ and think, ‘Well, that’s not really how it’s going to happen,’” says Furneaux. “I came into the role with 16 years in the stunt industry, so being able to bring the idea of what is possible onto a movie set helped me immensely. I think we reached a really nice compromise where the audience gets an incredible movie experience, plus real survival information.”

“Ky is the most kick-ass woman I have ever met,” says Rachel McAdams. “She knows everything about survival, and she was invaluable to the production–every day there were a million questions for Ky from me, Sam and Dylan, and she always had a wonderful answer that immediately made it all make sense. It was fun to get inside the survivalist brain and approach work from that place every day, and maybe I could survive a few days longer now if I was stuck on a deserted island than I would’ve before working with Ky!”

“We couldn’t have done it without our survivalist, Ky Furneaux,” Raimi insists. “Everything followed her realistic techniques for surviving in the wild. She taught us the proper techniques if you were in fact stranded on this deserted island, from water gathering, to how to hunt, how to fish, how to build a shelter, how to make cord out of roots and make it supple by winding it around a tree, how to build three different kinds of fire. She was there for everything. And we designed, with our great prop department and production designer Ian Gracie, all the shelters and the tools that Linda would find and use on the island. They were very accurate.”

STUNT STRATEGY AND PLANNING

The stunt work was designed by John Walton and his team, with the key sequences including the plane crash and the fights on the island between Linda and Bradley.

After the office setup, the first key turning point toward the inevitable bloodshed is the plane crash.

“The plane sequence looks absolutely wild,” says O’Brien. “It’s the first sign that the movie’s taking an absurd turn, and you know what you’re in for at that point.”

Ian Gracie and his team built a “pull-apart” private jet set that could then be submerged in a water tank as the plane hits the water in the film.

“The plane crash was planned out by me, a number of storyboard artists and the pre-visualization team,” says Raimi. “We figured out every shot up to a certain point precisely, down to the lens and the camera movement. And then we kind of improvised when we got there, but it was really well thought out because so many of the physical effects had to be created ahead of time.”

“We take it to the limit, the scenes in the plane,” admits McAdams. “I’d never done water-tank work before, but the idea of it was scarier than actually doing it. It was incredibly safe. John, our stunt coordinator, took us carefully through what was going to happen, and we did lots of tests.”

McAdams continues: “Having to pretend that I couldn’t get my seatbelt off underwater, with Sam then asking, ‘Can you scream underwater at the same time, blow some bubbles out, but then make sure your eyes are open?’ was really intense! It took a lot of coordination and a lot of time, but I feel like we conquered it, and now I can go into tank work with a bit more confidence.”

“Rachel was very brave to do that scene,” says Raimi. “Like any sinking scene, you usually take the shell of the boat or the shell of the airplane, and you have to actually lower it into the water to make it really feel like it’s sinking. She is in that airplane seat, in this fuselage of a plane that our production design built, and we had to submerge her under water. I don’t know if I could do that. I could direct it, but I don’t know if I could be in that seat and experience the water rising up.”

The “feral fight” on the island was written to be ugly and scrappy, like a battle between siblings who don’t hold back. For a film fight to be messy and at times vicious requires, paradoxically, more choreography and rehearsal than a more streamlined fight.

“It’s probably the most difficult fight I’ve ever had to engage in,” admits O’Brien. “So many fight scenes that I’ve done, you’re throwing punches which are misses made to look like hits. This was a gritty piece of choreography, having to perform with such ferocity, like that of an animal. It was really difficult, but we were able to bring the feral nature that was required, and we got out alive. Nobody got hurt.”

McAdams adds, “John was so great about walking us through it, making sure we had the time. And our stunt doubles were so incredible. I can’t imagine they felt good at the end of the sequence. I bow down to them.”

Key props also had to break down within scenes. Pre rig supervisor Dan Carlisle, working with SFX supervisor Dan Oliver, built a custom-fabricated foam raft, based on a double made by the art department from beach detritus and bamboo, but which could be safe for use with cast and stunts.

“The raft had a radio-controlled, pneumatically actuated release system,” Carlisle explains. “Bradley is not a competent raft maker, and his vessel unfortunately begins collapsing after the first wave comes through. Because we needed that to happen at a particular cue point, we made it remote controlled, with radio-controlled releases. So, after the second or third wave hits it, the raft separates, leaving Bradley adrift.”

“We tried to do as many physical effects as we could,” says Raimi. “Even in the boar-hunting scene, we had great puppet designers and a great puppeteer to help Rachel experience what it

would be like if this creature was so near or chasing you or charging you or trying to bite your head off. It was really a team effort, and they all contributed to Rachel's performance in that way."

COSTUME WEAR AND TEAR

Costume designer Anna Cahill admits, "The first time I read the script–a two-hander on an island–at face value I thought, 'Oh, maybe it's not much of a costume job.' But as I looked in more detail, I realized how interesting these two people and their journeys really are. Trying to develop them within such limited costume scope was an exciting challenge."

Cahill came to her first Zoom with Raimi having developed extensive backstories for the characters. The director and designer were on the same page.

"It is so important to know who these people are when you see such a small snippet of their lives," says Cahill. "Sam knows exactly how he wants things to be, and he's thought through everything. At the same time, he's very trusting of his heads of department and their creative input. He's very willing to listen to your ideas and always wants to do what's best for the film."

Once they're on the island, with their luggage at the bottom of the ocean, one costume–in progressive states of decay–has to carry Linda and Bradley for the rest of the film.

"For Linda, it was about preserving who this character was, who we developed in the office and in the photographs around her apartment and in her 'Survivor' videotape," adds Cahill. "At every opportunity, Rachel and I discussed how we keep this Linda, even though she's now turning into this transformed woman. How do we make sure she's still the Linda that we met at the beginning of the film?"

Linda moves from frumpy in the office to a far more striking look, built around layers that would enable the transformation and scope.

"The first layer we lose is her jacket, then we are left with a shirt, tank top, underwear, pants and her grey mules, which serve a vital purpose later in the film," continues Cahill. "As she loosens up and gains power, she can roll sleeves, undo buttons, reveal that she's wearing a tank top, and she creates a 'Survivor'-style bandana that references her favorite show."

While Linda has this adaptability, Cahill didn't want Bradley to come across as prepared in any way, shape or form. She wanted him "stuck in one thing and that's it."

"Bradley's shoes were scripted as a $5,000 pair of suede loafers," says Cahill. "Loafers are obviously a key part of who the character is. We settled on a woven pair of designer suede loafers that were so much fun to break down on the island. If you think about wicker furniture

when it starts coming apart, they begin to look really beautiful as they slowly unravel with Bradley."

"It was incredible to see how the costume team did it every day," says O'Brien. "The loafers breaking down is no legitimate wear or tear. It was all artistry."

Bradley breaks down quicker than Linda, from the moment he washes up on the island. He slices through his pants, and blood, mud, sand and bites are thrown at him for a good part of the beginning of the film.

As such, tracking the multiples and the stages of costume degradation was a complex mathematical system, complicated by shooting out of sequence.

"It was an enormous challenge, but my department was incredible," recalls Cahill. "My on-set team was constantly checking and double checking what multiple is the right one to use at this point."

"We had almost 50 pairs of Linda's pants in various stages of distress. The singlet versions at any one time had stains from earlier moments, and tears, then multiples of that exact version needed to do this particular sequence, which then took us to the next level. It's amazing what my teams, both in Australia and in Thailand, were able to keep on top of and to map."

"Anna Cahill is brilliant and talented, and we loved playing with all the costumes for Linda," agrees Azizi. "We did some padding underneath the clothing because as she enters the island, she loses weight, but we didn't want to make it too comical. We wanted it to be very, very natural. We wanted the costumes to be looser, ill-fitted, and possibly a few decades behind in fashion. And even her shoes have a whole subplot in the film; we call them the Linda mules."

MAKEUP AND HAIRSTYLING

Makeup and hair designer Chiara Tripodi and her team had to similarly chart precise transformations for both Linda and Bradley.

"The most difficult part with Rachel was, how do we make the most beautiful actress seem like someone that you would not notice in the office?" Azizi says with a laugh. "She's just so stunning. It took a lot of work, and makeup, and costumes, and tests to really turn such an iconic, beautiful actress into the overlooked executive in the office."

"Because the camera loves Rachel, we had to fight against that, to dull her up a little bit," agrees Tripodi. "We made her hair darker, and she was very pale. In the urban world, I devised that she's full of allergies. She has a red nose, and her eyes are red and itchy. Then she lands on the island. She's still not thinking about how she looks, but she becomes one with nature. A tan, and

an inner glow starts to happen. I really tried to plot it out so that it would sneak up on the audience, so before they know it she is blossoming into the Linda of the end of the film."

For Bradley, the inverse journey had to be mapped.

"Bradley is the opposite," explains Tripodi. "Linda embraces her survival instincts, but he's got no idea. He gets bitten by insects, he gets sunburned, dehydrated, and we express all this in his makeup and hair journey. He starts off healthy and fit, and by the end he's a mess. He becomes less handsome as she blossoms."

The blood and grit were another key storytelling tool.

"There's a lot of blood in this movie," observes McAdams. "The blood tastes quite sweet. It's got corn syrup in it, and the mud is made of cookies and maple syrup. Chiara Tripodi, our extraordinary makeup artist, put maple syrup in it for me, because I'm Canadian, instead of honey. I've never been this dirty in my life on a movie between the bug spray, the sunscreen, the practical stuff, and then the dirt, the sand and the blood!"

ORIGINAL MUSIC BY DANNY ELFMAN

The original score for "Send Help" was written by Academy Award®-nominated composer Danny Elfman, whose collaborations with Raimi span over 30 years. The pair previously worked together on "Spider-Man," "Darkman," "A Simple Plan" and "Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness."

"It was great, incredibly great, collaborating with Danny Elfman, as it always is for me," Raimi says. "He literally makes your movie one letter grade better. And he always knows where to put his music and precisely the tone to elevate the scene. It's not what you might think it would've been."

"The thing that made me say yes to 'Send Help' without even knowing what the movie was, was the fact that it was Sam Raimi who was the director," says Elfman. "Sam and I have worked together for somewhere between 30 and 35 years now. And Sam's one of those people when he calls with the question of if I'm available, I automatically say yes."

In Azizi's experience, "Danny Elfman is a dream come true to work with. He is an absolute legend, and he's elevated so many scenes."

As he approached the project, Elfman was excited to find the right tonal balance for the film's music landscape.

"Balancing all the elements of a film and a score is the fun part–you take things in many different directions. The thing that was unique in 'Send Help,' because I've done a number of

thrillers, is this also had a kind of a dark comic side to it, which made it even more fun to play, because sometimes I can have fun with the music and just play it over the top in a kind of a broad way. And then sometimes it's like, 'No, now I really want to be intense and moody with the music.'"

For Linda Liddle's theme, Elfman wanted to reflect her character's transformation.

"I wanted to find a theme that played very sweetly and gently with a woman's voice that could be both innocent and have a tinge of madness to it," Elfman explains. "And so, I think I used as my inspiration 'Rosemary's Baby.' It was a score that I really loved growing up. When we hear her theme early on, it's got kind of an innocent quality to it, but by the end when we hear it, it takes on a darker, more sinister quality to the same voice singing the same theme. I always love it when I can do something like that, take a little innocent piece of thematic material and in its simplicity and innocence try to make it feel almost menacing."

Elfman adds, "The whole end of the movie was delightful and fun to score too, because things get so intense."

"Danny has a mastery of film and music that nobody else has–he tells the story with his music," Raimi says. "He enhances, he sometimes plays counterpoint when he decides, sometimes he stays out because the moment will land better like that. He's a never ending teacher for me of how film music works. I couldn't ask for anything better than what he delivered."

Elfman's experience on the production was an equally positive one.

"With Sam, it's just fun. I love the dynamic between me and Sam and Bob, the editor, because we all go back together. Really, it's just like getting back into the playpen for us. It's almost like we went to elementary school together and we were play pals back then. And now, as adults, we get to get together and play in this big playpen called a movie. And even though we didn't know each other as kids, that's kind of what it feels like to me. It just becomes a joyful experience."

"My only wish when audiences hear the music, is that it enhances their experience of the film," Elfman concludes.

FILMMAKER AND CAST BIOS

SAM RAIMI (DIRECTOR, PRODUCER)
Director, writer and producer Sam Raimi first rose to prominence with the beloved cult classic trilogy "The Evil Dead," "Evil Dead II" and "Army of Darkness."

Raimi quickly established himself as a genre-bending innovator, directing early-career hits including “Darkman,” starring Liam Neeson and Frances McDormand; “The Quick and the Dead,” starring Gene Hackman, Sharon Stone, Russell Crowe and Leonardo DiCaprio; “A Simple Plan,” starring Bill Paxton, Billy Bob Thornton and Bridget Fonda; “For the Love of the Game,” starring Kevin Costner and Kelly Preston; and “The Gift,” starring Cate Blanchett.

Raimi notably directed the blockbuster “Spider-Man” trilogy starring Tobey Maguire and Kirsten Dunst, which collectively grossed over $2.5 billion worldwide; the supernatural horror-comedy hit “Drag Me to Hell”; and the 2022 Marvel Studios tentpole “Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness” starring Benedict Cumberbatch and Elizabeth Olsen which grossed over $955 million globally.

Raimi’s genre-defining producer credits include “The Grudge” starring Sarah Michelle Gellar; “Don’t Breathe” starring Stephen Lang and Jane Levy; and the critically acclaimed Starz series “Ash vs Evil Dead,” a sequel to his “The Evil Dead” trilogy.

Raimi was born and raised in Michigan.

ZAINAB AZIZI (PRODUCER)
Zainab Azizi is a producer with a passion for telling original stories and elevating women and underrepresented voices, both in front of and behind the camera.

As president of Raimi Productions, Azizi has overseen development and production of several hit films. She was named one of Variety’s 10 Producers to Watch in 2025.

Her most recent feature is “Locked,” a psychological thriller starring Sir Anthony Hopkins and Bill Skarsgård, streaming now on Hulu. Azizi produced the 2024 Netflix thriller “Don’t Move,” which became the No. 1 film in 83 countries on the platform and was the No. 1 most watched horror film in October 2024, according to Nielsen.

Additional feature film producing credits include “Umma,” a supernatural horror film starring Sandra Oh for Sony Pictures; “65,” the sci-fi thriller starring Adam Driver for Columbia Pictures; and the action-comedy spectacle “Boy Kills World.”

Born in Washington, D.C., and a graduate of the University of Maryland, Azizi is a first-generation Afghan American whose love for the arts began at a young age.

Azizi is a member of the Producers Guild of America and Women in Film.

RACHEL MCADAMS (LINDA LIDDLE)
Academy Award®-nominated Rachel McAdams’ transformative performances have established her as one of Hollywood’s most sought-after and respected actors.

McAdams made her Broadway debut in “Mary Jane,” written by Pulitzer Prize finalist Amy Herzog and directed by Anne Kauffman. The show opened in April 2024 and ran through June 30. McAdams received many accolades for her heartbreaking yet standout performance, including a Tony® nomination, a Drama League nomination, a Drama Desk nomination, and an Outer Critics Circle nomination; and she won a Theatre World Award and two Broadway.com Awards.

Most recently, McAdams starred in Lionsgate’s film adaptation of Judy Blume’s best-selling novel “Are You There God? It’s Me, Margaret.” McAdams plays Margaret’s mother, Barbara, who is tasked with guiding her precocious daughter through her many quandaries. McAdams starred alongside Kathy Bates, Abby Ryder Fortson and Benny Safdie. The film was released in April 2023, and McAdams received critical acclaim for her standout performance. She won a Los Angeles Film Critics Award for best supporting actress and was nominated for a Gotham Award for outstanding supporting performance.

Also in 2023, McAdams guest-starred on FX’s popular series “Dave” in three episodes as herself, alongside Brad Pitt and Dave Burd.

McAdams reprised her role as Dr. Christine Palmer opposite Benedict Cumberbatch and Elizabeth Olsen in “Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness,” directed by Sam Raimi. Disney released the Marvel film on May 6, 2022.

In 2020, McAdams played Sigrit Ericksdóttir opposite Will Ferrell in Netflix’s “Eurovision Song Contest: The Story of Fire Saga.” The musical comedy, based on the international Eurovision Song Contest, was directed by David Dobkin. The film launched on Netflix in June 2020 to rave reviews and went on to receive multiple award nominations for best original song.

McAdams was also seen in “Game Night” alongside Jason Bateman and Kyle Chandler. Warner Bros. released the film in February 2018.

In 2017, McAdams starred in Sebastián Lelio’s “Disobedience,” co-starring opposite Rachel Weisz. The film, based on the Naomi Alderman novel of the same name, tells the story of a woman who returns to her Orthodox Jewish home following the death of her rabbi father. She stirs up controversy when she rekindles a repressed love with her childhood friend. “Disobedience” premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival in September 2017.

In 2016, McAdams starred alongside Benedict Cumberbatch, Tilda Swinton, Mads Mikkelsen and Chiwetel Ejiofor in Scott Derrickson’s Marvel film, “Doctor Strange.” Disney released the film in the U.S. on November 4, with a No. 1 opening weekend spot and an opening domestic gross of $85 million. The film has currently grossed $636 million worldwide and is in the top 10 highest earning domestic releases of 2016.

Prior to that, McAdams starred in Thomas McCarthy’s critically acclaimed “Spotlight,” alongside Michael Keaton and Mark Ruffalo. The film tells the true story of how the Boston Globe

uncovered the massive scandal of child molestation and cover-up within the local Catholic Archdiocese. “Spotlight” received numerous accolades, including three Golden Globe® Award nominations, five Independent Spirit Award nominations, seven Critics Choice Award nominations, two Screen Actors Guild Award® nominations and five Academy Award® nominations. “Spotlight” received the 2016 Critics Choice Awards for best original screenplay, best picture and best acting ensemble; the 2016 Screen Actors Guild Award for outstanding performance by a cast in a motion picture; and the 2016 Academy Awards for best writing, original screenplay, and best motion picture. Individually, McAdams was nominated in the category of best supporting actress in a motion picture at the Critics Choice Awards, Screen Actors Guild Awards and Academy Awards.

Previous film credits include Woody Allen’s “Midnight in Paris,” which earned McAdams a Screen Actors Guild Award® nomination for outstanding performance by a cast in a motion picture alongside cast mates Owen Wilson, Kathy Bates, Adrien Brody, Marion Cotillard and Michael Sheen. She starred as Irene Adler in Guy Ritchie’s “Sherlock Holmes” and “Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows” opposite Robert Downey Jr. She also starred in “The Little Prince” opposite Jeff Bridges, Paul Rudd and Benicio del Toro; Anton Corbijn’s “A Most Wanted Man” opposite Philip Seymour Hoffman, Robin Wright and Willem Dafoe; Cameron Crowe’s “Aloha” opposite Bradley Cooper and Emma Stone; “Southpaw” opposite Jake Gyllenhaal and Forest Whitaker; Wim Wenders’ “Every Thing Will Be Fine” opposite James Franco; Michael Sucsy’s “The Vow” opposite Channing Tatum; Richard Curtis’ “About Time” opposite Domhnall Gleeson; Terrence Malick’s “To the Wonder” opposite Ben Affleck; Brian De Palma’s “Passion” opposite Noomi Rapace; Roger Michell’s “Morning Glory” opposite Diane Keaton and Harrison Ford; “The Time Traveler’s Wife”; “The Family Stone” opposite Diane Keaton and Sarah Jessica Parker; Wes Craven’s “Red Eye” opposite Cillian Murphy; “Wedding Crashers” opposite Owen Wilson, Vince Vaughn and Christopher Walken; Nick Cassavetes’ “The Notebook” opposite Ryan Gosling; and “Mean Girls.”

On television, McAdams has been seen in Nic Pizzolatto’s “True Detective.” McAdams played Sheriff Ani Bezzerides, a Ventura County Sheriff’s detective whose uncompromising ethics put her at odds with others and the system she serves. She starred alongside Colin Farrell, Taylor Kitsch and Vince Vaughn. The series premiered on June 21, 2015, on HBO. McAdams was nominated for a 2016 Critics Choice Award in the category of best actress in a movie made for television or limited series.

McAdams was born and raised in a small town outside of London, Ontario, Canada. Involved with theater while growing up, she went on to graduate with honors with a BFA degree in theater from York University.

DYLAN O’BRIEN (BRADLEY PRESTON)

Dylan O’Brien is one of the brightest talents of his generation, with a body of work that speaks to his proclivity for championing unique and personal storytelling.

He recently starred in “Twinless,” a dark comedy that premiered at the 2025 Sundance Film Festival, where it won the U.S. Dramatic Audience Award and O’Brien won the Special Jury Award for Acting. O’Brien also served as an executive producer on the film, which was released in theaters in September 2025 by Roadside Attractions and Lionsgate. His critically acclaimed dual portrayal of twins Rocky and Roman earned him a nomination for best lead performance at the 2026 Film Independent Spirit Awards.

O’Brien has completed production on the Apple TV drama “Being Heumann,” from Oscar®-winning director Sian Heder. “Being Heumann” is based on the memoir of disability-rights activist Judy Heumann and also stars Ruth Madeley and Mark Ruffalo.

Other recent credits include the groundbreaking drama “Ponyboi,” which premiered at the 2024 Sundance Film Festival and was the first feature film to center an intersex character and actor (River Gallo) in a lead role. In October 2024 O’Brien received critical acclaim for his portrayal of a young Dan Aykroyd in Jason Reitman’s “Saturday Night,” which chronicles the behind-the-scenes drama leading up to the first broadcast of “Saturday Night Live.” That same month, O’Brien starred in the streaming hit “Caddo Lake,” for which he was nominated for a Gotham Television Award for outstanding performance in an original film.

O’Brien first rose to fame playing the fan-favorite character Stiles on the hit MTV television series “Teen Wolf” (2011-2017). He is also well known to audiences for his starring turn as the lead character Thomas in the popular “Maze Runner” film franchise (2014-2018), adapted by Fox from James Dashner’s best-selling YA novels.

His additional film credits include the political thriller “Anniversary” (2025) opposite Diane Lane and Kyle Chandler; the ensemble comedy “Maximum Truth” (2023) from writers David Stassen and Ike Barinholtz; the satirical comedy “Not Okay” (2022), for which O’Brien was nominated for an MTV Movie & TV Award for best comedic performance; the crime drama “The Outfit” (2022) opposite Mark Rylance; the Antoine Fuqua-directed action feature “Infinite” (2021); the sleeper hit “Love and Monsters” (2020), a sweet and irreverent take on an apocalypse movie; the Lionsgate thriller “Flashback” (2020); Paramount’s “Bumblebee” (2018), where O’Brien voiced the eponymous character; “American Assassin” (2017) opposite Michael Keaton; “Deepwater Horizon” (2016), directed by Peter Berg; the Fox comedy “The Internship” (2013) starring Vince Vaughn and Owen Wilson; the romantic comedy “The First Time” (2012), which debuted at the Sundance Film Festival; and “High Road” (2011), an improvised independent film directed by Matt Walsh. O’Brien also co-starred with Sadie Sink in Taylor Swift’s short film version of her iconic song “All Too Well” (2021).

O’Brien’s additional television credits include guest appearances on “Fantasmas” (2024), “The Other Two” (2023), “Curb Your Enthusiasm” (2021), “Amazing Stories” (2020), “Weird City” (2019) and “New Girl” (2013).

O’Brien was first discovered via YouTube in a series of comedic online shorts, which he directed, produced and starred in.

ADDITIONAL CAST AND FILMMAKER BIOS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST